

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 4-6, 8, 11-13, 15-20, and 23-25 are pending. Claims 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 14, 21, 22, and 26 are withdrawn. Claims 1, 8 and 17 have been amended. No new matter has been presented.

Claims 1, 6, 8, 13, 15-20, and 25 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Nishikawa, U.S. Patent No. 5,475,481, in view of Wassermann, U.S. Patent No. 3,259,288. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner asserts that Nishikawa teaches all of the claimed features of claim 1 except for the braking device between said paper supply device and said tractor 34. The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to have modified Nishikawa in view of Wassermann to create the claimed invention. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite a tractor provided at a location upstream of the image forming device and a braking device located between said paper supply device and said feeding device. In a printing apparatus where the feeding speed of the feeding device located downstream of the photosensitive drum is higher than that of the tractor to apply tension at a region where the image is transferred from the drum onto the sheet, the tension causes hole breakage on the sides of the sheet. According to the device claimed in claim 1, the tension is formed in the forward direction by the feeding device, whereas the braking force is formed in the backward direction by the braking device to pull back the sheet. It is important to achieve this effect that the feeding device be positioned downstream with respect to the tractor and the braking device is positioned upstream with respect to the tractor. Claim 1 now recites this feature.

Since neither Nishikawa nor Wasserman are concerned with hole breakage, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to modify Nishikawa to provide a braking device upstream of the tractor disclosed in Nishikawa.

Further, it is completely unnecessary to apply tension in Nishikawa's device because the sheet pass shown in Fig. 1 is a zigzag pass which would cause the sheet to rub against the walls if

tension was applied. Thus, Nishikawa actually teaches away from employing such a braking device upstream of the tractor.

Claims 8 and 17 also recite the above discussed feature and are therefore allowable for the reasons set forth above in connection with claim 1. The remaining claims are allowable at least due to their respective dependencies. Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 4, 11 and 23 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Nishikawa in view of Wassermann, and further in view of Nishimura, U.S. Patent No. 5,018,888. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Nishimura fails to cure the defects, as stated in the remarks above, found in Nishikawa and Wassermann. Therefore, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 5, 12 and 24 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Nishikawa in view of Wassermann, and further in view of Ara Yoji (JP 61-094955 A). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Yoji does not cure the defects found in either of Nishikawa or Wassermann. Thus, the rejection should be withdrawn

Claims 1, 6, 8, 13, 15-20 and 25 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Nishikawa in view of Puritscher, U.S. Patent No. 6,370,351 B1. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

As stated above, Nishikawa actually teaches away from placing a braking device upstream of the tractor. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to modify Nishikawa in view of Puritscher to create the claimed invention.

Claims 4, 11, and 23 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) on Nishikawa in view of Puritscher and further in view of Nishimura. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Neither Puritscher nor Nishimura cure the defects found in Nishikawa. Therefore, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 5, 12 and 24 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) on Nishikawa in view of Puritscher, and further in view of Ara Yoji.

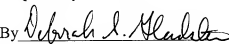
The defects of Nishikawa are not cured by either Puritscher or Yoji, or any combination thereof. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 325772024500.

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Respectfully submitted,

By   
Deborah S. Gladstein

Registration No.: 43,636  
MORRISON & FOERSTER LLP  
1650 Tysons Blvd, Suite 400  
McLean, Virginia 22102  
(703) 760-7753